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REVIEWS

THREE BOOKS IN ONE

Those who have been calling for a single volume which should contain everything needed for third- and fourth-year English except the classics studied, will find their desire fulfilled in Mr. Hitchcock's latest book.¹ To quote from the author's preface, "This volume, designed for use in the last two years of the secondary-school course, contains . . . a brief review of rhetoric, including a little vocabulary of terms commonly employed in talking about books; a general classification and discussion of the various literary forms—fiction, drama, essay, etc.—together with suggestions both general and specific how these forms may be studied; a summary by periods of English literature, containing what I think is the minimum a pupil should know upon graduation—such information as an intelligent man or woman ought to possess." To the rhetoric the author devotes 125 pages; to the study of literature, 110; to the history of literature, only 80.

Nearly two-thirds of the rhetorical matter consists of a discussion of the principles of purity, clearness, force, beauty, and style. The author declares that the study of these rhetorical principles may be quite as useful in developing appreciation as in developing skill in composition. In the chapters on purity and clearness he gives advice to the young writer; in the chapters on force, beauty, and style he discusses chiefly the excellences we may find in the compositions of others. It is difficult to see that the chapter on style has much value in the study of either literature or composition. The treatment of the four types of discourse, which constitutes the remaining third of the rhetoric, is the best thing in the book. The types having been distinguished between in less than a page, we are given half a dozen clear, concise directions for successful composing of each kind, and these suggestions are followed with a sufficient body of practical exercise material. The chapter on beauty may be difficult to use effectively, but these concrete suggestions for narration, etc., will be easy of application and productive of large results.

¹ *Rhetoric and the Study of Literature*. By ALFRED M. HITCHCOCK. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1913.

Part II, devoted to the study of literature, starts badly with thirty pages of correct but rather uninteresting and almost useless discussion (1) of the benefits of reading and (2) of the proper classification of the kinds of literature. Then follow some good chapters on the study of prose fiction, the drama, the essay, and poetry. Prose fiction, says Hitchcock, is made up of five necessary elements: plot, characters, setting, a central thought, and the author's craftsmanship and personality. The paragraphs of explanation of these elements contain nothing new, but they are well organized and, in the hands of the pupils, should make the instructor's work lighter and more effective. Finally there are many questions, arranged according to the elements they concern, to be answered by the student after he has read any piece of prose fiction. The treatment of the other types of literature is very similar, more detailed in some cases but not more impressive.

How to use these studies in literature, though they are logical and fairly provocative of thought, will be a real problem. To begin with the principles of criticism and then to bring in the literature, would be to run counter to all our pedagogical notions. The difficulty might be solved, in the fiction at least, by reading the masterpiece through first and studying the chapter in Hitchcock immediately afterward. The author himself, however, in the appendix gives detailed questions upon several masterpieces, and he does not follow the method laid down in the body of the text. This discrepancy he explains by saying that it is rarely possible to read the whole classic before beginning the detailed study.

Part III characterizes each period of the history of English literature and treats briefly a few of the chief writers of each age, leaving detailed biography to the editors of the "classics" which are studied by each class. Here, as in many other places, we find clear evidence of the shaping of this material by actual classroom practice. At the head of each chapter appear the names of those whom one should recall in review, the most important ones printed in bold-faced type. A three-page folder displays a chronological chart of our literary history, showing the century, the literary period, the contemporaries, and the literary field of each of the principal writers from Chaucer to Ruskin. Throughout the book, tables and diagrams have been introduced wherever they can possibly be helpful.

The appendices include the ever-present rules for punctuation, an adequate treatment of versification, a list of topics for themes or orations, and a specimen brief.

Perhaps some will think that the book is too much of a compendium

—that so many things cannot be satisfactorily done in a single volume. Yet we are coming more and more to feel that the rhetoric text need be only a set of interesting composition projects with some very clear directions for accomplishing them, and that our histories of literature are burdened with masses of useless detail. The test of such a book as this is not how much detail it gives but how clear and usable it is. The more one turns over the pages of *Rhetoric and the Study of Literature*, the more he is impressed with the practical nature of the whole book. It may not be the *best* rhetoric or the *best* history of literature, but it ranks high as both of these; and it is, with one exception, the only practical high-school students' handbook for the study of literature as art.

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THE FRESHMAN AND HIS COLLEGE

It is a byword among educators that the Freshman on first entering college is placed under the most serious of handicaps through the newness of almost all aspects of college life and his total inexperience in preparation for them. As a rule, he is warned of this as he leaves school and reminded of it as he enters college by the utterances of deans and the assurances in college journals. He is gravely warned that the water is deep, and then left to flounder alone.

Professor Lockwood's book, *The Freshman and His College*, is as amazing as certain obvious inventions the value of which everybody recognizes—as soon as they are made.¹ This slender volume includes seven brief sections by the author, only twenty pages in all, devoted to the opportunity of college work, the meaning of college education, the difficulties and the dangers and the current criticism of the American college, and the value of clinging to ideals, developing industry, and wisely selecting work. Then follow twelve admirably selected utterances from John Henry Newman, William James, Presidents Jordan, Hyde, Eliot, Meiklejohn, and Hibben, from J. B. Johnson, W. W. Thoburn, and the author.

One's first inclination on thoughtfully reading the volume is to send it to every Freshman of one's acquaintance; next, for reasons of economy, at least to recommend it to them, and finally, as a matter of expediency, to require it as a supplement to any Freshman composition.

¹ *The Freshman and His College: A College Manual*. By FRANCIS CUMMINS LOCKWOOD. New York: D. C. Heath & Co., 1913. Pp. vi+156.